

Entrevue Clara Gutsche
Jan 14 / 82

①

Franck → O.K this is clear, and that's take one
C. t. → Clara, one of the things ^{ehh} you
tend to do is to work in projects
can you talk about that
orientation, how long a project might
take you to do, what the specific
projects are, what's ~~the~~ ehh sort of
provoques you to do a project?

Clara → Anything that I would
have to say is a result of (Hine's
sight) ^{oo}? (insight) and analysing the
projects after they've been done. so

it's patterns that I have noticed just ⁽²⁾
because that's what has happened
it's that simple and the patterns
seems to be. It's not what I'm
saying it's not a preplanned ~~from~~
sort of pattern and there's no
philosophy behind a changing the
content of my projects from time
to time ~~from~~ and I have just
noticed that I work ~~on~~ intensely
on a given ~~from~~ subject with a
given format of camera, given approach.
for ~~from~~ three years & four years
sometimes five years and during that
time I'm very wrapped up in that
particular project and after that time

I have exhausted whatever it had ⁽³⁾
offered me and I look for something
that's fairly different from other #
different camera will serve ~~as~~ the
spring board for getting in into some
different project the discipline or
challenge of seeing in a slightly
different size and shape of format.

C.t. for example, if you take for
example the project of the six
sisters the little girls - C.G. yeah

C.t. can you just talk how
become involved in that project

C.G. - o.k. C.t. - () that when
with it.

C. G. That and, I think ④
all of the projects that I've done
do grow out of my everyday life
they're autobiographical in some
sense from either ^{you know} some situation
that I'm living or you know some
from situation I'm reliving the

little girls ^{In the photos of the six sisters, an extended portrait,} I think was a combination
of reliving my own childhood and
looking forward to what would like
to have a child] ~~this is before~~
~~I had a child: from and you~~
~~know one was not specifically~~
planned I think on some level
I wanted one and he was you know

I think that was somewhat ⑤
you know ^[that was] the emotional content that
was firing [that particular project] here
It started very simply because we
worked, we lived excuse me next
door to a family of six little girls
who ranged in age from 8 to 16 at
that time and [It was also a logical
extension of the previous project]
That I've done photographically a
logical extension in the sense that
[I worked in Milton park here and
the centre sud] Milton park and
centre-sud well [Milton park was
my ~~own~~ ~~own~~ own neighborhood

~~horn~~^{but} / didn't know the people ⑥
very well] / tend to take one
photograph and that was it in a
given situation [Centre - Sud #
wasn't even my own neighborhood]
horn and / didn't know the people
that well and again [It was again
a sort of survey of the psychology
and sociology of those neighborhoods
and portraits but portraits in the
sense of a sort of social interaction
level^{level} rather than intimate level]
[So the little girls was you know
sort of ~ thought out extension of that
of wanting to horn take one person

two persons three people (7)
and ~~the~~ follow them over a long
period of ^{time} them] so it's an in depth
portrait of of you know the six girls

C.T. - yeah you might in current
terminology [it might be called an
extended portrait]

C.G. - yeah () / titled ()

The show : six girls an extended
portrait

C.T. - yeah turn so they... you
have extended in ^{two} the way I see it
you have extended in two directions
you have both different images

⑧
of the same person at different
times whether they be just ~~each~~
different instants & very close
together or else you have each
different images of interrelationship
between 1 or 2 or 3 of the girls.]

C.G. you referring to the single
images as opposed to the ones ~~that~~
~~the~~ that are multiples.

C.T. No I'm referring primarily
to the multiple images.

C.G. o.k

C.T. () no the whole body

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of work really.

C.G. ha ha ^{because} to my mind different things happened in the single images as oppose to the multiple images where the multiple images & [in () 2, or 3 or 4 ^{images} together] it ^{then} emphasized some sort of shift and ⁱⁿ a couple of the most successful ones the shifts were psychological] like variations and expressions on the faces from [some of the other ones were from more (gross mother) shifts you know

[with the kids playing so
the differences from image to image
are from a child swinging or
a child walking in a different
direction that sort of thing or
[There's one that I like a lot
where the four kids sitting on
a bench so there eight legs
and the eight legs shift positions
from in each of the four images
so you get eight times four legs]
- hu ha - (laughing from both)
~~that's~~ () - really you

know comes out more strongly
in that particular image

C.t. will you talk about psy-
chological shift. Why is that
important to you what ...

C.G. Look that was a main
component of the whole project
from not so much ~~from~~ for
most of the multiples but from
I would argue ~~that~~ that posttrauma
is primarily a psychological
Z

hom - record of of an event
you know ~~you~~^{even} between yourself
and the subject. hom in the
particular multiple I'm thinking
of ~~what~~^{when} I say shift it's a
head portrait of the same little girl
and at first^{en} glance it's look
like there isn't any difference
in the three expressions. It's look
like there same negative printed
three times and when you look
at it more clearly more closely

you realized that there ~~has~~ in fact been a change - w - and it just emphasises you know the most extremely subtle variation and expression can have enhance you know the subtle variation and psychological state.

C.T. what ~~you~~ would be the time difference between those and three shots

C.G. I was working with large format with 4x5 so it's a question of ~~if~~ just you know flipping the

film holder in and out so it would have been a question maybe 5 seconds.

C. t. Euh um OK. when

you were doing those () projects were you interested ~~in~~ in euh different instants of time was that a particular interest.

C. G. - that has ~~year~~ ^{year}.

with the large format one thing that happen ~~after~~ is am interested in the tensions on the contradictions between



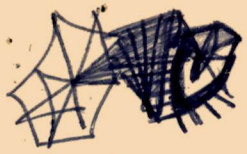
stillness of the large format and
it's very composed and you
usually know you know
most of the things ~~are~~ are very
in very sharp detail and stopped
time but I often might have the
contrast of some thing blurred
some thing moving in the frame
during the time of exposure
which is usually fairly exposures
so the object or the person
moving is blurred here so that's
one aspect of time on a ~~time~~

sort of philosophical level (16)
\$ / was ~~am~~ aware that subphoto-
graphing the little girls had
a sort of nostalgic poignant
aspect of stopping moments that
were () it's a
fantasy that you can stop
time and hold on to time you
re-live an experience.

C.t. In this particular
project was the background or
the environment important
to you?

CG ya ~~the~~ it was still very
important that also relates back
to the Milton park project ~~in~~ and
Centro-Sud in being ^{euh} some sort
of logical evolution in terms
of you know my thinking
you know and what different
things I wanted to try euh
in Milton park and Centro-Sud
how the environment was
either more or as important
in terms of the informations

~~contain~~ content in you know
emotional whatever term as
the person term the portrait of
the person was you know literally
an environmental portrait ~~it~~
in the little girls term the
person was the central focus
term & was primarily a portrait
and the environment was used
as a ^{sort of} secondary proper echo or
reinforcement term and I was
aware of the term backgrounds
either in terms of tonalities



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to project a particular mood many
of the backgrounds are fairly dark
brown or else silver middle gray
brown or else to use for a little
bit of information ~~from~~ brown a
staircase a brick wall ~~to~~ brown
a few games you know
these little things ~~there~~^{these} are close
were also brown ~~in~~ an important
component and something that
I consider in the () sense
part of the environment brown
and I just you know was ~~was~~

aware of () ~~on~~ I suppose
~~of~~ a sort of sociological level
from these ~~to~~ close where
the main objects. It was a
household that didn't have books
or you know lot of pictures
a lot of records where they
seem to put the emphasis was
in the clothing so from the
purposes of the photographs ()
you know visually you can
read ~~that~~ what there is to
be read about that family

and I was aware of that a few people have commented on that too so it is something that seems to come across to the viewer.

C.T. - the next project that you did ~~the~~ dealt with ~~the~~ store windows

CG - hu-hu!

C.T. and in fact the commercial aspect of eh () clothes whatever and that - I have a sense that's very different eh than the portrait

or the extended portrait of the
six sisters ~~~~~

C. G. I would agree that it is
quite different from that again
it's from it's interesting (

) it's probably by accident
but that came out from taking
walk after supper from along
park avenue and we went up
Javier and looked in all of the
windows these are sheets with
a lot of shops so it's shop
window shopping after hours

hem so I just got fascinated with
 window shopping it's a great thing
 to do I like the hem the display &
 both in terms of design and
 what it's says about our
 society there's to my mind
 a great wealth of information
 about ^{uh} what we're interested in
 uh what do we do how do we
 do it all sorts of things

aussi le groupe de photographes ppo pulaire, toujours au debut des années
 70, 71, 72, c'était entre autres une certaine complaisance à vouloir non
 seulement valoriser l'individu dans son milieu mais tout ce qui pouvait
 s'appeler québécois, je crois que culturellement on participait aussi à
 un certain à un apport disons culturel euh à renforcer ce que moi j'ap-
 pelle aujourd'hui une sorte de nationalisme étroit finalement tout ce
 qui était québécois c'était beau, c'était bon on ne tenait pas compte
 justement des réalités sociali

the things are to sell but for me
they become symbolic objects
symbolising you know all sort
of complex relationship that we
have between each other and to
our society, and whatever so,
you know I sort to look at
the windows from all those
different point of view partly
just as a consumer there is
that level to how you know
some of the stuff is attractive to
buy you know and you ~~tend~~
~~to~~ fantasize about having ()


whatever. So that's what the beginning
 Visually it was also a beginning
 because a lit up window at night
 from provides a means of focusing
 or zeroing in on the window it's
 a very brightly lit window
 surrounded by nothing by dark space
 from and you move from one discrete
 rectangular window to the next one
 from ~~with~~ with a space a dark space
 between so you can () ^{visual} sense
 of series from and that

~~no one~~
~~a window not it est de l'inter~~
~~trouvé d'hat il est de l'inter~~

eventually translated in the final

visual form of the photographs where
 I photographed during the day because
 the sun light gets a spot lighting
 effect from I photographed some
 in overcast conditions depending
 on whether I wanted the reflections
 to be dominant or the merchandises
 to be dominant from and eventually
 I began to print them in such a
 way that there ~~was~~^{was a} black a large
 frame around the windows so
 than the image the spot lighted
 images floated on the dark space
 and this refers back to the experience





of viewing windows at night when the dark space becomes an extension of the window and can be read as part of the building or you ~~know~~ a dark () or you know those sorts of images.

C.T. you euh ^{The word} ~~what~~ fantasies comes up euh or has come up twice — euh These images of store windows relate to a particular fantasy as well — outside the fantasy of wanting ^{to have} what's in them.

C.G. humm not that I can think of () the top of my head () I have to think about some more humm no I - I don't think so

C.t Do They eh

C.G () I think The photographs record people's fantasies and I suppose ~~who~~ part of what I was ~~reg~~ recognizing ~~th~~ was perhaps you know hom things & That were ~~the~~ portrayed are thing that () for me

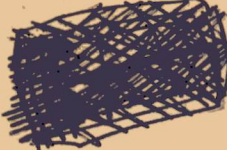
C.t So given That you have a good control of lighting situations would you use those to reflect particular attitudes that you might have

1 CG - yeah the uh show
I described the different lighting
effects. The light is very overcast
the . you get a fairly somber effect
with a lot of reflections in the
place so you get a real complex
interleaving and interweaving of
the surface reflections and merchandise
from the surfaces of the building
Itself from reflections of clouds
reflections of the other side of the street
from if it's medium overcast hazy sun
or bright overcast where you have a
few clouds from you often get an

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intermediary effect with the reflection
playing an important part but equal to
or maybe a little bit less than
eye being able to see the merchandise
(1) itself so you get a sense of the
merchandise but sort of you know
seen through the overlay of the
clouds when often come out very
strongly in that sort of lighting
situation when bright sun does
have a real spot light effect it
minimise the shadows to the point
of completely eliminating them
often () excuse me reflections
from the glass itself so the what

So what you see primarily is the merchandise in the window and a visa card or master card charge master card euh that are hung up on the surface of the glass the bricks in front of the building that sort of things. And euh () about mood () that's what more describing the effect the sunlight would have has a more a sort () mood of razor blade shadows the shadows that are cast are from the building and they are often very sharp angular shadows

 and that gives a sort of razor edge effect to the photograph so there is almost a sense of violence in some of the spot light ~~sun~~ light photographs C.t. Would you choose ~~the~~^{such} the lighting situation and the content of the store window in conjunction.

C.G. I think I work ~~work~~ a little bit more accidentally I go out on different types of lighting days different lighting situations hoping to find you know something that would be appropriate for that type of lighting and if I went out on a

cloudy day I was bound to ~~know~~ notice a certain type of window that I would pass by on a sunny day with is to say that I was reacting to that window as being appropriate ~~for~~ euh for him cloudy light maybe a more romantic or ~~see~~ you know pictorial effect the photographs with overcast lighting or cloud lighting tend to function him on in the different emotional content than the sunlight ones so if I went out on the sunlight day I would tend to him notice you know the window & that were looking particularly threatening or challenging or him

C.t. yeah what I was referring to
 Specifically was if you go on a sun
 light day and you have a mannequin
 in the window and this euh ()
 shadow comes across euh the body
 of the mannequin you've got a good
 chance ~~of~~ be heading him or her

C.G. ^{yeah} hum - hum

C.t. and ^{were} you ~~unconsciously~~ ^{consciously} ~~unconsciously~~
 doing that

C.G. yes ya I was looking for
 that kind of things euh because
 it was part of the overall euh
 emotional and intellectual content
 of the photograph of both an

attraction to the consumer items
to the whole consumer society and
repulsion from also you know to
that society, and to those items
not ~~to~~ wanting to buy them not
wanting to be attracted - and
I've also you know thought
sometimes of ^{the} mannequin symbolizing
~~people~~ ^{that} one thing I was reacting
to and identifying with this a
certain violence that's done to women
~~and~~ people in certain situations
just the way the mannequins are
displayed often to me symbolizes
~~how~~ how people see women in the

in the society people would argue
they're just mannequins but I think
you know they're placed and who
places them and why they do that
is ~~\$~~ euh has a lot of meaning.

C.T. in some pictures whether euh
there are not necessarily representations
of people you have euh interrelation-
ship between objects which simply
don't go together

C.G. hu - hu

C.T. so that those ^{inter}relationships
are absurd. C.G. - ha-ha

C.T. - ridiculous euh which
sometimes make you laugh

although you may not want to
C.G. han-han. This is something
I haven't mention before ()
~~was~~ was actually very important
and I guess maybe one of the
Themes that's running through what
I'm saying ha The attraction and
repulsion, a sense of contrast here

There was a sense of violence and
criticism of that violence ~~on~~ my
part but there's also was a real
sense of humor I was laughing at
a lot of the things that I found
in the windows and some of those
displays where you find (-) objects

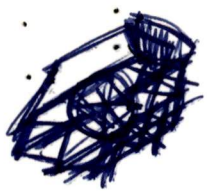
juxtaposed against one another
It's just ridiculous you know on a
serious level it might symbolize
alienation and fragmentation but on
a non serious level it's just funny
you know The absurd you mention
horn but other things like (band)
a huge (band) deodorant That's look
~~for instance~~ very much like a phallus
and a euh ha picture of a jewel
store with a photograph of a large
ass horn and a shadow running
down ~~the~~ across that photograph
horn you know There just a lot
absurd imagery and my attitude
was ~~for in~~ very much you know

laughing from partly ironically
and partly & just the enjoyment
of you know the absurdity of
people of humanity so they not
you know heavily critical photographs
in that sense you know

C.T. Do you^{uh} in this next project
which is on parks what prompted
you to ~~start~~ start it and uh
where is it currently going

C.G. ha I give you the real
history (laughing) I spent I wanted
to use large format I had windows
for a long time and I did them for
a couple of years after (

him and used a stimulation of
going to different cities to discover an-
other city ~~so~~ through its windows
which was very exciting but I got
to the point that I seem to get
() my projects ~~of~~ exhausting
that you know particular subject
~~you know~~ in terms of you
know it's being worth developing
all that film and printing ()
when I stopped I still loves
windows I still look at them
anyway I started using 8x10 format
as a way of challenging myself and
breaking out of old habits and finding



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you know different situations different
room in terms of content and also different
design~~s~~. I spent a year doing sort
of murals and flat wall~~s~~ spaces in
Montreal and at the very end of that
summer I started working with parks
spaces and playground spaces often
very city spaces where you have a wall
in the background and a parking lot
and some sort of cement foreground
and that letting to the parks room
it's partly grows out of having a
small child and spending huge amount
of time in the park and I like to
photograph things that are very familiar to

to me which is something that you can
 see through all of these projects that
 here they all come sometimes after
 I become ~~to~~ live a particular experience
 and the photographs you know functions
 as a records or extensions of that
 experience or what have you! ^{from} So
 the parks grow out of partly here the
 formalist concerns that I started with
 8x10 and I like the structures you
 find on playgrounds here the
 form you know really here interesting
~~uh~~ simple constructions, structures
 here ~~the~~ and I enjoy ~~the~~ having
 people entering to my photographs



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once again here it's very small reference
form! they're not portraits in any sense but
here even though they're very small
details in the photographs they are definiti-
vely important elements to me the people
~~in~~ here symbolize some you know
people activity obviously and hopefully
the viewer will ~~be~~ identify with
the people and experience the photographs
through the perspective of seeing some-
body in the photograph: so that's why
some of them don't have any people in
them and dealt again with more
formal concerns I like minimalist
photographs to a great extent ~~that's~~

lot of them have a great sketch of empty foreground and a great ^{straight} sketch of empty white sky and all of the details from sketch from left to right they're horizontal photographs along the horizon line there details from trees or houses or you know little bit of equipment that sort of things

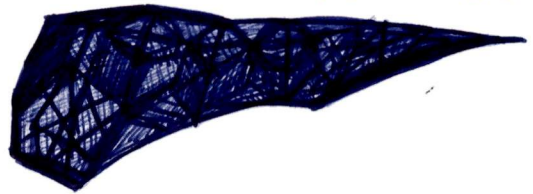
C.F. Do ~~you~~ you () to do a say systematic investigation of how parks are used what happens ~~in~~ in parks different aspects of parks

C.G. ha it's not very systematic in that respect that photograph

in several different parks here including
Vancouver ~~and~~ Seattle but euh and it
occurs to me to do that sort of systematic
() of parks here but my work
usually functions on some level that
doesn't is not conducive to doing a
systematic analysis where the emotional
content is a little bit more loose
and I like to let that role in ~~the~~
a way that you can't if you set
out almost a scientific analysis
and comparison of different situations
that are similar but different so
that's not really what I'm looking for
I'm looking for more subtle euh changes

mostly in the same park I've
really zeroed ~~in the~~ into one park
~~for the~~ ~~photographing~~ ~~from~~ ~~all~~ ~~different~~
perspectives where you get ~~different~~
references ~~ha~~ from one photograph
to another the same objects ^{will} keep
reappearing in different parts of the
photograph so that's one thing
that interests me here I'm maybe
you know interested in doing
different seasons ~~ha~~ so far I've
found the spring the most interesting
~~ha~~ because the trees are bare and
it gives a very prickly ~~hom~~ feeling

to the photograph on a very hom-
subtle level because the trees are
small in the photograph but they're
still very light, you can see the
sky through the trees and the
formations of their branches are
very interesting.



C.T. - So just to summarize. one
of the things that tends to be important
to you is to work from something
which is close to you or within your
own experience and either develop it
or reflect on it or whatever (laughing)

C.G. - A synthesis of what I've
been saying Ah () - laughing

O.K. - words laughing etc.... Come back

C.T. who ~~do~~ would you consider to be important photographers in Quebec?

C.G. Ah. Jesus. I'm ~~not~~ not prepare for that one at all ah

Ah. oh. The I'm you know the ones that's occur to me of the top of my head are ones that you would have heard many times over him.

Gabor Szilasi and Tom Gibson and Michel Campeau

C.T. Why would you consider Gabor Szilasi important?



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C.G. Ah so this become the question of how does one judge the importance of a photographer?

C.T. - No - laughing, it's simply...

G.G. "Does it, does it you know - Are you asking what interest me about Gabon's work or

G.T. yeah, what interest you about Gabon's work

C.G. because when I'm asked the question of the important photographer I react partly on the level you know

standing back from my own work and my own values and I admire the volume out put and the seriousness of somebody's intent you know like you can tell a work is good even if it is not work ~~good~~ that you necessarily you know would put up in your house him . so you know these are the sort of people I would try to think of for that sort of question. Gabon's photographs I've always like personally very much they deal with some of the same concerns I've dealt with him social documentary photography often very human

concerns where he builds up a real rapport with people from also interesting formal ~~but~~ ^{with} concerns inter in interesting design and places with lighting and you know that sort of thing.

C.T. . O.K.

FRANK → This is clear soliloquy take one

C.G. → The objects were modest...
~~text~~ ^{text} par Fernand Léger.

depended on it

FRANK. clear soliloquy take two

C.G. → repetition